

**TOP SECRET**

31 January 1967

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** Deputy Director for Intelligence**SUBJECT** : Estimates of Casualties in North Vietnam

1. This memorandum is for your information and summarizes the casualty estimates from air attack in North Vietnam.

2. There are four key documents which contain the estimates of casualties from the air campaigns. The basic document is The Effectiveness of the Air Campaigns Against North Vietnam, 1 January-30 September 1966. This is the so-called McNamara III report. On page 14 it gave the following table:

	<u>1965</u>	<u>Jan-Sept 1966</u>	<u>Total</u>
Civilians	6,000	11,900	17,900
Attacks on Fixed targets	2,000	700	2,700
Attacks on armed recon- naissance missions	4,000	11,200	15,200
Military	7,200	3,800	11,000
Attacks on fixed targets	4,300	400	4,700
Attacks on armed recon- naissance missions	2,900	3,400	6,300
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>13,200</u>	<u>15,700</u>	<u>28,900</u>

3. The three other key documents which draw on these figures are: (1) Memorandum for the President, dated 16 January 1967, sub-  
ject: Dropping Casualties in North Vietnam; (2) the follow-up to  
Senator Russell from the January briefing, "Selected Data on Vietnam" -  
Casualties in North Vietnam, dated 10 January 1967; (3) the memorandum  
to be released by Defense or State -- uncertain as to which as of today --  
on the casualty numbers.

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3. All of these four documents are consistent since the latter three draw exclusively on the first. All of these estimates are CIA produced.

4. The so-called McNamara IV, entitled, The Rolling Thunder Program -- Present and Potential Target Systems, dated January 1967, updates the casualty figures through the end of 1966. It is, so far, the only document which does so. On page 4 it contains the following table:

Estimated Casualties from Rolling Thunder  
1965-66

	<u>1965</u>	<u>1966<sup>a/</sup></u>	<u>Total</u>
Civilians	<u>6,000</u>	<u>17,900 to 20,200</u>	<u>23,900 to 26,200</u>
Fixed targets	2,000	900	2,900
Armed reconnaissance	4,000	17,000 to 19,300	21,000 to 23,300
Military	<u>7,200</u>	<u>4,650</u>	<u>11,850</u>
Fixed targets	4,300	400	4,700
Armed reconnaissance	2,900	4,250	7,150
TOTAL	<u>13,200</u>	<u>22,550 to 24,850</u>	<u>35,750 to 38,050</u>

a/ Preliminary estimates.

5. You will note that the casualty figures for 1965 are identical in both tables. The full year 1966 figures are labeled preliminary because a range has been introduced on civilian casualties from armed reconnaissance. The lower end of the range, 17,000 has been derived by the same methodology used previously in all reports. The upper end of the range is weighted by a new factor -- tons of ordnance dropped. We are not certain that this method yields a more accurate result; it is still being discussed with DIA analysts. Hence, we called 1966 preliminary and showed the results of both methods. Our best estimate is that the old method (lower end of range) will prevail, but we'd like to carry on the discussions briefly.

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6. You will note that the methodology question concerns only civilian armed reconnaissance casualties. Civilian casualties from strikes on fixed targets and military casualties from all causes rest on other methodologies and are not in question.



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